

A Taxonomic Study of the Genus *Indigofera* Linnaeus in Rajasthan

BY

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INTRODUCTION

The genus *Indigofera* Linn. comprises a little more than 300 species distributed in the tropical zones. Africa claims the largest number of species. About 42 species are reported from India. In the existing floras and other similar publications, including some of the more recent ones, the genus is treated more or less unsatisfactorily with frequent uncertainties in specific conception, nomenclature, and description. An exhaustive taxonomic investigation of the genus as represented in India has, therefore, been highly desirable for a long time. The present work is an attempt to give a morphological and taxonomical account of the representatives of the genus in Rajasthan. The work was started in 1956 by one of us (NCN). By the time our work progressed considerably, Ali (1958) published his revision of the genus *Indigofera* from Pakistan and NW. Himalayas. This work was very helpful in the completion of the present account. It must be mentioned that the species of *Indigofera* found in Rajasthan have not earlier been the subject of a comprehensive taxonomic investigation. Although the representative species were few, the work was more time-consuming than was thought likely in the beginning, particularly because we have attempted to study the material in the field itself and to examine the herbarium sheets from almost all the districts of Rajasthan. Therefore our place of work was now the museum, now the laboratory, and now the field. A very large sample of each species has been studied closely. This would have been impossible without the materials obtained from various quarters and facilities given to us by various museums for studying the herbarium sheets. We therefore owe a great debt of gratitude to the numerous persons we have troubled. Of the various persons who helped us we should like to mention in particular Rev. Fr. H. Santapau, St. Xavier's College, Bombay (now Chief Botanist, Botanical Survey of India), who gave to one of us facilities to work in Blatter Herbarium, and who went through the manu-

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